



Susan Zhuang criticizes shift away from rental assistance

page-02



Architecture, History, and National Identity Converge in Sydney

page-04



Queens Marks Eid with Celebration at Borough Hall

page-06



Elhaam Academy's 'Hands of Hope' Program Centers Student Voices

page-08

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# NEW YORK NEWS

The Voice of People

From New York



Photo: Demonstrators march through Kansas City's Country Club Plaza during a "No Kings" protest, March 28, 2026.

Image Source: AP Photo/Charlie Riedel

## 'No Kings' Protests Surge

Crowds gather across the U.S. and Europe in anti-Trump rallies

**Alexandar Sullivan**

Large crowds gathered on Saturday in cities across the United States and in parts of Europe for the latest wave of "No Kings" rallies, protesting President Donald Trump's actions,

the war in Iran, and aggressive immigration enforcement. The movement's flagship event took place at the Minnesota Capitol in St. Paul, where thousands packed the lawn for a high-profile

demonstration headlined by Bruce Springsteen. The singer performed "Streets of Minneapolis," a song he wrote in response to the fatal shootings of Renee Good and Alex Pretti by federal agents. Addressing the

crowd, Springsteen praised Minnesota's opposition to a surge of U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement activity, saying, "Your strength and your commitment told us that this was still America."

Demonstrations stretched from New York City to Driggs, Idaho, with organizers saying more than 3,100 events were registered in all 50 states. While turnout estimates remained unclear, organizers had expected as many as 9 million participants. Most rallies were peaceful, though tensions flared in some cities. In Los Angeles, police deployed tear gas near a federal detention center and later made arrests after ordering crowds to disperse. In Denver, officers declared an unlawful assembly after protesters blocked a road; at least nine people were arrested. Protesters voiced a wide range of concerns, including immigration raids, the rollback of transgender rights, billionaire influence in politics, and U.S. military involvement overseas. Rallies also took place in London, Paris, and Rome, underscoring the movement's widening international reach. For many participants, the day was not only about opposition, but visibility — a public demonstration that dissent remains organized, energized, and unafraid.

## Pope Warns Against Violence

Remarks seen as rebuke to political and military leaders

**John Paul**

Pope Leo delivered a pointed appeal for peace during Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Square, condemning leaders who invoke religion while waging war. Speaking to thousands of worshippers on Sunday, the pontiff said God does not listen to the prayers of those whose "hands are full of blood." He described the conflict involving Iran, Israel, and the United States as "atrocious" and stressed that Jesus cannot be used to justify



Photo: The pope said the conflict in the Middle East was 'atrocious' and Jesus should not be used to justify war.

Image Source: Anadolu/Getty Images

violence. Although he did not mention anyone by name, the remarks came days after U.S.

## Gulf Sites Come Under Fire

Iranian strikes hit key industrial facilities as war widens



Photo: Aluminium Bahrain said its facility has been attacked by Iran, with two employees wounded

Image Source: Aluminium Bahrain / BBC

**Lily Anderson**

As the U.S.-Israel war against Iran entered its fifth week, a new wave of attacks struck critical industrial and infrastructure sites across the Gulf, deepening fears of wider

economic disruption in one of the world's most strategically important regions. The United Arab Emirates reported injuries and significant damage after an Iranian strike hit a major aluminium

plant in Abu Dhabi operated by Emirates Global Aluminium. In Bahrain, state-controlled Aluminium Bahrain said two employees were wounded in an attack on one of the world's largest aluminium

### HIGHLIGHT

●Iranian attacks struck major sites in the UAE, Bahrain, Oman, and Kuwait.

●Key aluminium plants and airport infrastructure were damaged.

●The conflict has entered its fifth week.

●Gulf states fear broader economic fallout.

smelting facilities. Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said it targeted the plants with drones and missiles, claiming the sites were linked to the American military. Elsewhere, Oman said it was investigating an

attack on its southern port of Salalah, where a foreign worker was reportedly injured. Kuwait also said its international airport radar system was significantly damaged in a drone strike. The attacks come at a time of rising regional anxiety over energy and trade routes. With the Strait of Hormuz effectively disrupted and Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis joining the conflict, Gulf governments are increasingly concerned about the economic consequences of a prolonged war. For countries whose economies depend on industrial output, shipping, and stability, the latest strikes are a stark reminder that the conflict's impact now extends far beyond the battlefield.

### HIGHLIGHT

●Pope Leo condemned leaders who justify war through religion.

●Remarks came during Palm Sunday Mass at St. Peter's Square.

●Comments followed statements by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth publicly prayed for force against enemies. The pope instead urged reconciliation, calling on the world to choose peace over war.

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# OPINION

## Foolish and Futile War

— Imam Shamsi Ali

I'm honestly feeling apathetic about what's happening in the Middle East, including the ongoing war between Iran and Israel, backed by the US. My Ramadan resolve to stay focused isn't helping, especially seeing disappointing and shameful responses from some Muslim leaders, both political and religious. The formation of the "Board of Peace" (BOP) earlier, supported by some Muslim countries, is a prime example. Claiming to amplify Muslim voices and solve the Gaza and Palestine issue, the BOP has achieved nothing but stagnation. Violence continues in Gaza and Palestine, and Al-Aqsa Mosque remains closed during Ramadan, with BOP members seemingly powerless. The Iran War and Israel's Expansionist Agenda Amidst the BOP's fanfare, Israel, with full US backing, attacked Iran, killing nearly 200 girls and several

Iranian leaders, including Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and Chief Negotiator Ali Larjani. This blatant aggression contradicts the BOP's supposed "spirit of peace" and all international norms and laws. The attack isn't about Iran's nuclear capabilities; there's no evidence supporting this claim. Even if it is true, Israel and the US have no authority to attack a sovereign nation without UN Security Council approval. The real motive behind this attack is clearly Israel's expansionist dream of a "Greater Israel" with Jerusalem as its capital, aiming to eliminate Al-Aqsa Mosque. A Call for Muslim Unity I've repeatedly stated that Palestine's freedom and Al-Aqsa's liberation won't come from others' goodwill. The US and Israel won't grant Palestine



— Imam Shamsi Ali :  
 Director, Jamaica Muslim  
 Center & President,  
 Nusantara Foundation

independence willingly. The solution lies in Muslim political will and unity, and leveraging our collective potential to counter Zionist oppression. Israel's weakness without US backing is evident. The US falters when its interests are threatened, especially by Muslim nations. Saudi Arabia's King Faisal once shook US economy; Iran's closure of the Strait of Hormuz has rattled Trump's administration. Imagine if the Muslim world united and synergized its energy resources – the US wouldn't dare act with impunity. What also saddens me, Trump's administration openly declares this war on Islam (as stated by Secretary of War), yet Muslim leaders are still dreaming to receive kindness from them. What an absurd! Finally, as a citizen of this country,

I strongly oppose President Donald Trump's policy and decision to involve our men and women in uniform to engage in a war that benefits neither America nor its people. This war serves only the desires of Israelis extremist government, costing America dearly – financially, economically, militarily, and politically. The two-day attack on Iran reportedly cost over \$5 billion, with soaring oil prices affecting Americans' basic needs. In fact, we have lost brave sons and daughters in this futile war. Most critically, America's double standards damage its global reputation. Claiming to champion democracy and justice while violating all international norms is hypocritical. I urge the Trump administration to stop this senseless war. It's time to prioritize Americans' interests and welfare, not Zionist agendas. Think of our people struggling daily; open your hearts and minds! Wake up!

“

“The solution lies in Muslim political will and unity, and leveraging our collective potential to counter Zionist oppression.”



Image Source: Online

“

“I urge the Trump administration to stop this senseless war. It's time to prioritize Americans' interests and welfare, not Zionist agendas.”

## A Humanitarian and Geopolitical Analysis of the Iran-US Crisis

— Akbar Haider Kiron

In the last week of February 2026, US-Israeli jets killed Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and nearly 40 top military commanders. Following this incident, the Strait of Hormuz was closed, global energy markets became volatile, and widespread military conflict erupted in the Gulf region. This report analyzes the origins of the crisis, the current situation, and possible paths to resolution from a neutral perspective. Current Situation After Mojtaba Khamenei assumed office as the new Supreme Leader, Iran closed the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20% of the world's oil supply passes. According to UN data, ship traffic through the strait has decreased by 97%, and Brent crude prices have surged 9% to exceed \$100. Iran has launched drone and missile attacks on Gulf states—the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. Fires broke out at Fujairah port, the US Fifth Fleet headquarters in Bahrain was hit, and the radar system at Qatar's Al Udeid air base

was damaged. Historical Context In 1953, the CIA overthrew Iran's elected Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh because he had nationalized the oil industry. After the 1979 Iranian Revolution, US-Iran relations were completely severed. The 2015 nuclear deal brought some hope, but in 2018, Donald Trump withdrew the US from the agreement and reimposed maximum sanctions. Strategic Analysis Iran's Strategy: They want to exhaust the US economically and politically. Closing the Strait of Hormuz and attacking Gulf states are part of this strategy, which experts call "second-order coercion." US-Israeli Strategy: President Trump has said the war will continue "until Iran is completely and totally defeated." Israel's Netanyahu wants to overthrow Iran's regime. Under "Operation Epic Fury," 6,000 Iranian



— Akbar Haider Kiron  
 Senior Journalist, New  
 York

targets have been destroyed. Gulf States: On one hand, they seek security under the US military umbrella; on the other, facing Iranian attacks, they question—does this alliance bring them security or danger? Impact of the Crisis Economic: The World Bank warns that rising energy and transportation costs will increase the cost of living globally, especially in developing countries. Humanitarian: During Ramadan, Iranian and Arab families are spending nights with the sound of bombs. A Tehran resident says, "The windows rattle day and night. But life goes on." Geopolitical: Arms supplies to Ukraine are decreasing, and there are fears of conflict spreading to Iraq and Lebanon. Path to Resolution Iran's president has set conditions: recognition of Iran's legitimate rights,

compensation, and guarantees against future aggression. Meanwhile, Trump says, "We have to finish what we started." A possible solution could be a new agreement limiting Iran's missile and nuclear programs. Pakistan, Oman, and Qatar could step in as mediators, but successful mediation requires interest from both sides. Conclusion Peace doesn't just mean stopping war—peace means a child won't wake up to the sound of bombs, families can break their fast undisturbed during Ramadan nights, and no poor person in any country will be unable to afford fuel due to oil prices. We may not be able to stop this war, but we can ask questions—why are bombs being dropped in distant countries in our name, with our tax money? We can demand that our governments choose diplomacy and dialogue over weapons. History reminds us—war never brings a final solution. Peace is the only path where everyone wins.

# HERITAGE

## Architecture, History, and National Identity Converge in Sydney Book Launch of Old Dhaka—New Story Draws Global Design Leaders



**James Anderson**  
In a striking convergence of national pride, architectural thought, and global recognition, the launch of “Old Dhaka—New Story” by acclaimed architect Rafiq Azam was held on Thursday, March 26, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Utzon Room of the Sydney Opera House in Sydney,

Australia. Timed to coincide with Bangladesh’s Independence Day, the event transformed one of the world’s most iconic cultural venues into a platform for reflecting on Bangladesh’s architectural journey, the historic identity of Dhaka, and the social role of design in shaping human life. Published

by Rizzoli Publications of America, the book places Old Dhaka at the center of a broader architectural and cultural narrative, linking memory, urban history, and contemporary design vision. The three-hour program drew an audience of renowned architects, university professors, and other distinguished guests from Australia

and across the globe. Set against the dramatic surroundings of the Sydney Opera House, with sweeping harbor views near the Pacific Ocean, the evening carried an atmosphere that attendees described as both intellectually rich and memorable. The venue itself added symbolic resonance: the event was held in the Utzon Room, named for

Jørn Utzon, the architect of the Opera House. A central focus of the evening was the idea that architecture is not merely about buildings, form, or style, but about human welfare and the public good. Speakers highlighted the evolution of Bangladesh’s architecture, the forward movement of Dhaka’s urban landscape, and the distinctive philosophy behind Rafiq Azam’s work—one rooted in cultural memory, humane design, and social responsibility. Among the evening’s most notable figures was Glenn Murcutt, the internationally celebrated architect and Pritzker Architecture Prize recipient, whose presence was widely seen as one of the event’s defining moments. Participants expressed hope that the ideas embodied in “Old Dhaka—New Story” would contribute meaningfully to global architectural discourse and deepen public understanding of the relationship between heritage and design.

The program also included a refined social setting, with music, refreshments, and opportunities for conversation among leading intellectuals and design professionals. That blend of scholarship, celebration, and international exchange helped underscore the broader significance of the occasion. According to information shared at the event, the launch is part of a larger international rollout, with future programs expected in approximately 42 cities across 23 countries, including Tokyo. That ambitious schedule signals that “Old Dhaka—New Story” is more than a book launch—it is part of a growing global conversation about architecture, identity, and the human purpose of design. By the close of the evening, the message was clear: a story rooted in Old Dhaka had found a powerful global audience in Sydney, and its journey is only beginning.



# INSIGHT

## Alumni Delegation Returns from Unique Educational Tour

The New York chapter's itinerary included a full day at FBI facilities in Quantico

**Marcos Alonso**

Members of the FBI New York Citizens Academy Alumni Association recently returned from a special three-day trip to the Washington, D.C., area, a members-only experience centered on an exclusive visit to Quantico, Virginia, where participants were given a closer look at federal forensic and training operations. The trip, which ran from March 10 to March 12, 2026, was designed as both an educational and networking opportunity for alumni of the New York chapter. Participants checked in to a hotel in Washington, D.C. before the group's main visit on March 11, when they traveled together by bus from FBI Headquarters to Quantico for a full day of scheduled presentations and tours. The centerpiece of the visit was a program that ran



**FBI Citizens Academy - New York Division**



FBI Academy  
March 11, 2026



for new agents and intelligence analysts. The itinerary also included visits to notable training sites such as Hogan's Alley, physical training areas, and firearms ranges, along with a presentation by a subject matter expert. Because the visit involved a secure federal facility, organizers followed a tightly managed schedule. Participants

remain for the full program. They were also advised to wear business-casual attire and closed-toe shoes because of the amount of walking involved throughout the day. Beyond the main visit, the broader itinerary included a chapter dinner in Washington, D.C., on March 11, followed by a March 12 tour of Marine Barracks Washington. Together, the events gave alumni members an opportunity not only to deepen their understanding of federal operations, but also to reconnect with one another through a carefully coordinated chapter experience. For the association's New York members, the trip stood out as a rare and informative behind-the-scenes program—one that blended access, education, and alumni engagement in a way few chapter events can.

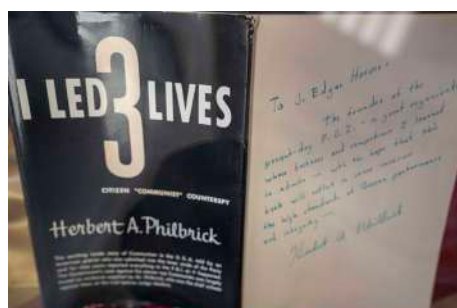
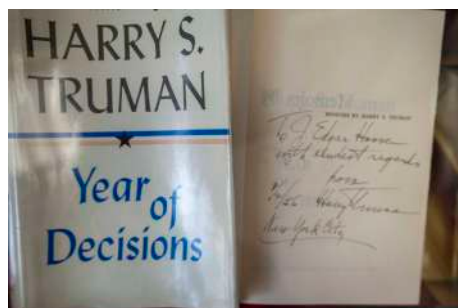
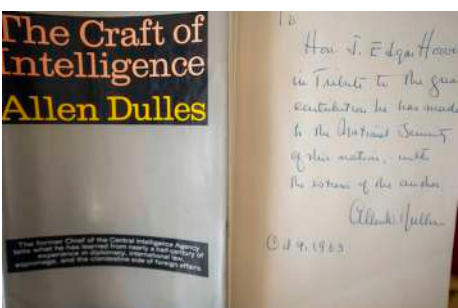


from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., not including travel time. The day began at the FBI Laboratory, where attendees received an overview of the lab's mission, scientific disciplines, and

forensic capabilities. That was followed by a guided look at selected laboratory areas, offering participants a rare, structured glimpse into the technical side of federal investigative

work. The latter portion of the day took place at the FBI Academy/Training Division, where the group learned about academy history and the training process

were required to complete advance screening, carry government-issued identification, use mandatory group transportation, and



All Photos are Collected from FBI NY CAAA

# CELEBRATION

## Queens Marks Eid with Celebration at Borough Hall

### Donovan Richards Jr. Hosts Community Gathering in Kew Gardens

**Ashley Reed**

In a public celebration of faith, culture, and borough-wide solidarity, Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr. hosted an Eid-al-Fitr Celebration on Wednesday, March 25, at 6:00 PM at the Helen Marshall Cultural Center at Queens Borough Hall in Kew Gardens. The event brought together community members to mark the end of Ramadan with an evening of performances, recognition, and festive gathering. Held at 120-55 Queens Boulevard, Kew Gardens, NY, the celebration reflected the diversity that defines Queens, home to one of the largest and most vibrant Muslim



populations in New York City. Promotional materials for the event promised "delicious treats, special cultural performances, honors for local leaders and much more," framing the evening as both a festive observance and a gesture of civic appreciation. Among those present



were Imam Muhammad Shahidullah, CEO of Save The People USA

(STPUSA), and Fatima Niass, Office Manager of STPUSA, along with other community participants and guests. Their attendance added to the event's strong representation from local Muslim leadership and community organizations. After the event, Donovan Richards Jr. shared a

message of support for the borough's Muslim residents, writing, "Eid Mubarak, Queens! To our Muslim brothers and sisters who showed us discipline, devotion and humility during the holy month of Ramadan, Queens is proud to be your home." He also addressed the broader social climate, adding, "In a time when Islamophobia continues to surge, we stand in solidarity with our Muslim community today and every day." That message gave the gathering significance beyond celebration alone. In honoring Eid-al-Fitr at Borough Hall, the event positioned the borough's Muslim community not at the margins, but at the heart of civic life in Queens. The inclusion of cultural performances

and recognition for local leaders further underscored the role Muslim residents play in shaping the borough's social and cultural fabric. The event also offered a space for families and community members to come together after a month of fasting, prayer, and reflection. For many attendees, it was both a joyful observance and a visible affirmation of belonging in one of the city's most diverse boroughs. By hosting the Eid-al-Fitr Celebration at Queens Borough Hall, Donovan Richards Jr. and his office delivered a clear message: the traditions, contributions, and presence of Muslim New Yorkers are an integral part of the identity of Queens, and worthy of both celebration and steadfast support.



# CELEBRATION

## Community Members Gather at Borough Hall for Performances and Honors



# AWARENESS

## Elhaam Academy's 'Hands of Hope' Program Centers Student Voices

Anti-bullying session blends art, reflection, and community responsibility

**William Henry**

In a program that combined honest conversation with creative expression, Elhaam Academy recently hosted Hands of Hope, a student-centered session focused on bullying awareness, kindness, and community responsibility. The event transformed the academy into a space for reflection and dialogue, as students examined the emotional impact of bullying and explored how empathy can help build safer, more supportive communities. At the heart of the session was a simple but powerful message: words, actions, and even silence can affect others deeply. Through open discussions, students were encouraged to think critically about the consequences of bullying and the role individuals play in shaping the atmosphere around them. Organizers emphasized that preventing harm begins not only with confronting cruelty, but also with choosing respect, compassion, and inclusion in everyday interactions. What made the event



reflection of the academy's broader belief that strong communities begin with young people. By encouraging students to use both their voices and their creativity, Hands of Hope offered a meaningful example of youth empowerment in practice. As the event concluded, its impact was visible not only in the artwork students created, but in the values the program aimed to strengthen: empathy over indifference, courage over silence, and



especially distinctive was its use of art as a form of response and reflection. After discussing bullying and its effects, students translated their thoughts into paintings that carried messages of unity, kindness, and standing

up for one another. Each artwork served as both a personal statement and a public expression of shared values, turning the session into more than a conversation—it became a visible act of community-building. The initiative is part of Elhaam Academy's

ongoing partnership with the NYC Office for the Prevention of Hate Crimes, a collaboration aimed at equipping young people with awareness, leadership skills, and the confidence to speak out against hate and injustice. By connecting bullying

prevention to broader issues of community responsibility, the program reinforced the idea that schools can play a vital role in shaping not only academic growth, but also moral and civic character. Organizers described the session as a

kindness over harm. In doing so, Elhaam Academy underscored a larger truth—that nurturing compassionate young leaders is one of the most effective ways to build a more respectful and resilient community.



# AWARENESS

## Hands of Hope encourages empathy, inclusion, and youth leadership





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# UNITY

## Queens Hosts Vibrant Eid Gathering with Civic Leaders

### Guy R. Brewer Democratic Club Event Emphasizes Community Partnership

Emily Parker

In a vibrant display of unity, culture, and civic engagement, the 3rd Annual Eid Mubarak Celebration was held on Friday, March 27 at 6:00 PM at the Guy R. Brewer Democratic Club, 197-01 Linden Blvd, Queens, New York. Organized by the Guy R. Brewer United Democratic Club in conjunction with the South Asian & Indo Caribbean Democratic Club of NY, the event brought together community members, leaders, and elected officials to mark the joyous occasion of Eid-al-Fitr. The gathering reflected the diversity of Queens, with attendees from various cultural and professional backgrounds joining in celebration. The evening featured a communal dinner and provided an opportunity for residents and leaders to connect in a setting rooted in shared values of



inclusion and respect. Among the distinguished guests were Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr., New York City Comptroller Mark Levine, New York State Senator Leroy Comrie, and Assemblymember Alicia Hyndman, whose presence underscored the growing civic engagement of Muslim and South Asian



communities in the borough. A key partner in the event was Save The People USA (STPUSA), which played an important role in supporting the

program. Representing the organization were Imam Muhammad Shahidullah, CEO of Save The People USA (STPUSA), and Fatima Niass, Office Manager of STPUSA, along

with other community participants. Their presence highlighted the organization's ongoing commitment to community development and civic collaboration. The event also saw participation from numerous community organizations and civic groups, reflecting a strong network of partnerships that continue to shape the social and cultural

landscape of Queens. By bringing together political leaders and grassroots organizations, the celebration created a platform for dialogue, relationship-building, and mutual understanding. As attendees gathered to share a meal and celebrate Eid, the evening served as more than a festive occasion—it reinforced the importance of community unity and civic participation. Events like the Eid Mubarak Celebration demonstrate how cultural observances can also function as bridges between communities and institutions. By hosting its third annual celebration, organizers reaffirmed their commitment to honoring diversity while fostering connections that strengthen the broader New York City community.



# SERVICE

## A Day of Service and Solidarity in Queens

### Save The People USA and JHCA lead neighborhood clean-up

**Noah Presley**

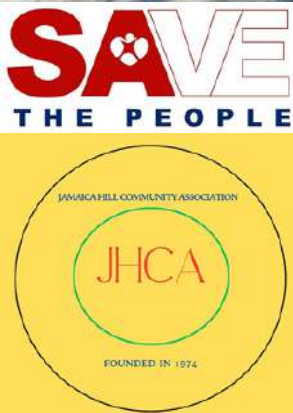
In a visible show of neighborhood pride and civic action, residents, families, and volunteers gathered in Jamaica, Queens, on Saturday, March 28, for a Community Clean-Up jointly organized by Save The People USA (STPUSA) and Jamaica Hill Community Association (JHCA). Meeting at Hillside Avenue and Parsons Boulevard at 10:30 AM, participants worked side by side to remove trash, clean local streets, and promote a healthier environment for the community.

The event reflected a shared commitment by JHCA and STPUSA to neighborhood well-being, with both organizations positioned as key partners in mobilizing residents around local service. Volunteers of different ages took part, from children to older adults, turning a routine clean-up into a broader statement about collective care and responsibility. Organizers emphasized that environmental stewardship begins



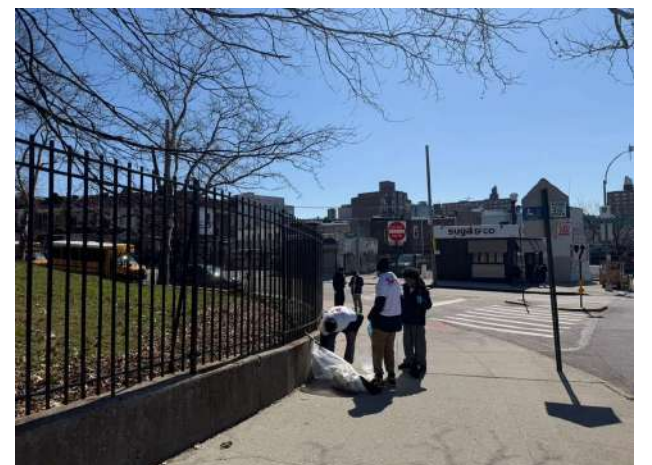
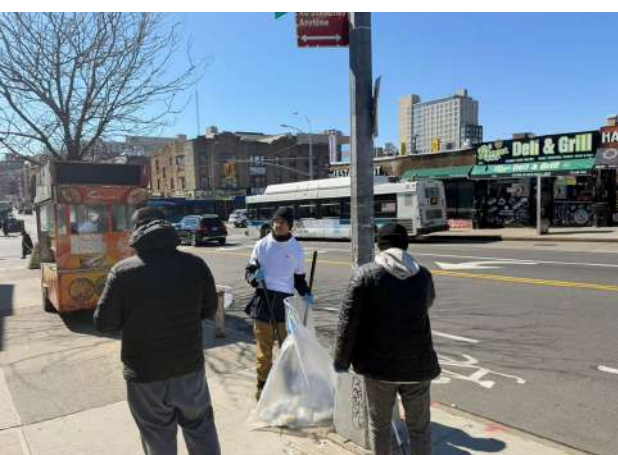
Queens represents: diversity, unity, and action. By bringing residents together around a common purpose, the effort demonstrated how local partnerships can translate shared concern into visible results. For Save The People USA, the clean-up also reflected its broader focus on grassroots engagement and public-minded service, while JHCA reinforced its role as a neighborhood-based force for community improvement. Together, the two organizations framed the event as part of an ongoing commitment rather than a one-time effort. By the end of the day, the impact was measured not only in cleaner streets, but in the spirit of cooperation the event inspired. The joint effort by JHCA and STPUSA offered a clear message: when neighbors come together with purpose, they can improve both their surroundings and their sense of shared responsibility.

at the local level. In remarks shared after the event, they described the effort as more than a one-day clean-up, calling it a practical demonstration of how meaningful change happens “not just in words, but in action.” Every bag of trash collected and every block cleaned, they noted, was part of a



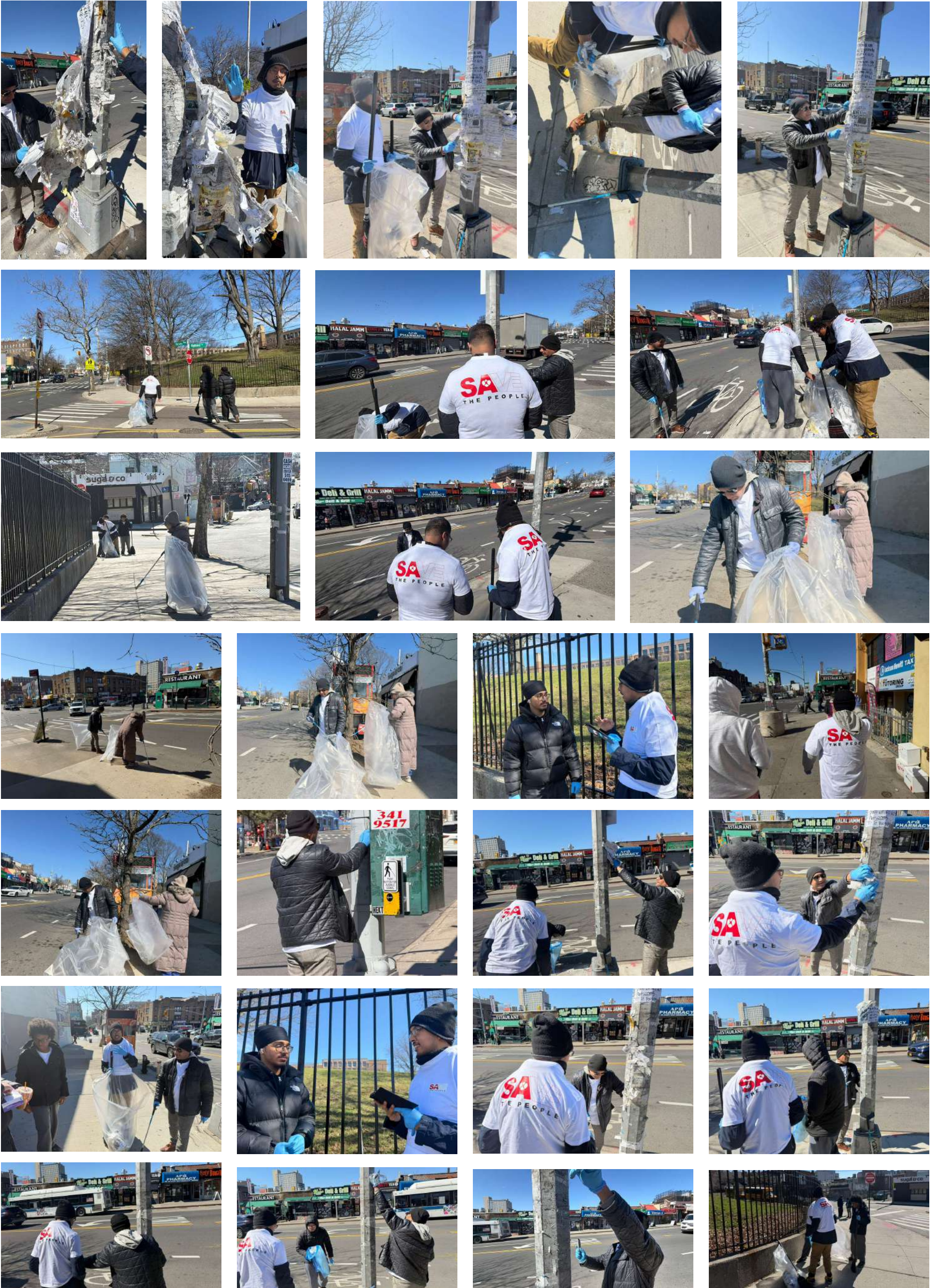
larger effort to protect the neighborhood and preserve it for future generations. The event also underscored the importance of community connection. As neighbors worked together outdoors, the clean-up became a space not only for service, but for

relationship-building. Organizers said the day showed how simple acts—cleaning streets, volunteering time, and working alongside one another—can strengthen bonds across the community. That theme of unity was central to the event’s message. Organizers described the gathering as an example of what



# SERVICE

## Volunteers join JHCA and STPUSA to clean and strengthen the community



# ADVOCACY

## Community Voices Reach Albany at Muslim Advocacy Day 2026

### More Than 100 Delegates Meet with State Senators and Assembly Members

**Jessica Morgan**

In a strong show of civic engagement, more than 100 delegates gathered at the New York State Capitol in Albany on March 26, 2026, for Muslim Advocacy Day 2026, an organized effort to bring the priorities of the New York American-Muslim community directly to state lawmakers. The event, organized by MUNA Alliance for Peace and Justice, served as a platform for Muslim New Yorkers to build relationships with elected officials while pressing for policies they say would better protect vulnerable communities and expand equity in public life. Participants met with state senators and assembly members, dividing into approximately 75 groups to present a focused four-point agenda and urge support for related



legislation and budget priorities. Among the day's central demands was a call to strengthen food security by funding HPNAP and Nourish New York at \$150 million and protecting SNAP benefits. Delegates also pushed for two education-related measures: official recognition of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha as



### MUNA ALLIANCE FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

public school holidays in districts with populations of 50,000 or more, and a requirement that all New York City public schools offer halal lunch options. Organizers noted that halal meals are currently available as a pilot program in 120 schools. A fourth issue centered

on civil rights and bias prevention in education. Delegates called on the New York State Education Department to develop K-12 curriculum addressing anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and broader bias prevention, with multilingual

materials including Bengali. Organizers described this proposal as an effort to build awareness and reduce hatred across lines of religion and identity. Participants portrayed the day as more than a lobbying effort. "It is my privilege to participate in the New York Muslim Advocacy Day on March 26, 2026, at the State Capitol in

Albany. This is a vital platform for fostering relationships between the New York American-Muslim community and our representatives. It's brought community voices to the Capitol. We hit the streets!" one attendee said. By the end of the day, the event had underscored a broader message about Muslim civic participation in New York: that advocacy is not only about policy requests, but about visibility, coalition-building, and making sure community concerns are heard where decisions are made. With a delegation of more than 100 members, Muslim Advocacy Day 2026 reflected an increasingly organized and public-facing effort to shape policy on behalf of the community and the wider public.





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# Moon Missions, Then and Now

## How Artemis differs from the Apollo legacy

**Amkel Nourush**

As NASA prepares for Artemis II, its first crewed mission to the moon in more than half a century, comparisons to the historic Apollo program are unavoidable — but the new effort is aiming for far more than a return to past glory. The Apollo missions carried astronauts to lunar orbit and then to the moon’s surface in a rapid burst of Cold War urgency, reaching the first landing in 1969. By contrast, Artemis has moved more slowly, shaped by decades of shifting priorities, new technologies, and a broader vision for long-term exploration.



Photo: NASA astronauts prepare for Artemis, the first crewed moon mission in more than 50 years. Image Source : AP

The upcoming Artemis II mission will send four astronauts around the moon on a free-return trajectory rather

than into lunar orbit, emphasizing safety and systems testing. The differences are not only technical. Artemis

reflects a more modern society, with a crew that includes a woman, a person of color, and a Canadian astronaut. “There is no way we could be that same mission,” astronaut Christina Koch said, underscoring how Artemis honors Apollo while moving beyond it. NASA’s ambitions have also changed. While Apollo was focused on beating the Soviets, Artemis is tied to a longer-term strategy that includes sustained lunar operations, a possible moon base, and eventual missions to Mars. In that sense, Artemis is not simply a return — it is a reset for a new generation of space exploration.



Photo: Kellen Matwick’s move to Turin hit a setback after a law change blocked his citizenship-by-descent claim.

Image Source: Jacqueline Matwick / CNN

# Citizenship Dreams Upended

## Americans in Italy face limbo after sudden rule changes

**Julian Alvez**

For a growing number of Americans who moved to Italy hoping to reclaim citizenship through their ancestry, a dream years in the making has turned into prolonged uncertainty. Families who arrived under long-standing citizenship-by-descent rules say they followed every step required by Italian authorities — securing leases, gathering records, registering locally, and preparing their applications — only to have the law change mid-process. A key shift came on March 28, 2025, when Italy imposed new generational limits, following an earlier October 2024 rule change that had already disqualified many applicants. The result has been legal and financial limbo. Some families remain in Italy without full immigration status, unable to work freely,

travel easily, or access normal services while waiting for court hearings. Others have returned to the United States after exhausting savings and uprooting their lives. “We did everything they wanted us to do,” said Kellen Matwick, whose family moved to Turin in August 2024. “Now I feel so stupid — because we did it the right way, we got penalized.” The fallout has exposed how abruptly the policy shift landed on people already in the system. Though Italian officials defended the crackdown as a way to curb abuse of citizenship claims, critics say the lack of a transition period has left legitimate applicants stranded. For many, the issue is no longer only about ancestry. It is about homes sold, jobs left behind, children enrolled in school, and lives suspended while they wait for courts — and Italy — to decide what happens next.

# The Black Market for Ants

## Kenya faces a surprising new front in wildlife smuggling



Photos: Giant African harvester ants - seen in Kenya - are popular with hobby collectors around the world

Image Source: Dino Martins/BBC

**Nassr Al Shams**

A booming black market in queen ants is turning parts of Kenya’s Rift Valley into an unexpected frontline in global wildlife trafficking, with a single prized insect fetching as much as \$220 from collectors

abroad. At the center of the trade is the giant African harvester ant, or *Messor cephalotes*, a species native to East Africa and coveted by hobbyists who keep ant colonies in transparent enclosures known as formicaria. Authorities say the scale

of the illicit business became clear last year when 5,000 live queen ants were discovered packed in tubes and syringes at a guest house in Naivasha. More recently, a Chinese national was arrested at Nairobi’s Jomo Kenyatta International Airport with another 2,000 queen ants. Researchers say the demand is driven by the global pet trade, especially in Asia and Europe, but the environmental stakes are serious. Removing queen ants can cause entire colonies to collapse, threatening grassland ecosystems where the insects disperse seeds and help maintain biodiversity. “Unsustainable

harvesting — particularly the removal of queen ants — can lead to colony collapse, disrupting ecosystems and threatening biodiversity,” said Mukonyi Watai of Kenya’s Wildlife Research and Training Institute. The trade has also exposed a regulatory gap: no ant species is currently listed under Cites, the global wildlife trade treaty. As officials weigh tighter enforcement and even regulated commercial breeding, Kenya now faces a difficult question — whether these tiny insects are best protected, policed, or profitably farmed.

# Japan’s Wildest New Race

## Office chair Grand Prix grows into a nationwide sport

**Adrian Smith**

What began as a playful idea has rolled into one of Japan’s most unusual endurance sports: competitive office chair racing, where teams of three speed through public streets on standard office chairs in a test of stamina, teamwork, and control. The races, known as Grands Prix, now take place annually in 10 cities, including Tokyo, Kyoto, and Shizuoka, after first launching in 2010 in Kyotanabe, Kyoto Prefecture. Founded by Tsuyoshi Tahara, the event was inspired



Photo: The toughest new sport in Japan is street-racing office chairs. Image Source: CNN

by a teacher who once scolded him for playing with an office chair. Competitors crouch low and kick the ground to propel themselves backward, completing as many laps as possible

in two hours. Winning teams often cover 20 to 25 kilometers, with racers wearing helmets, elbow pads, and knee pads for safety. “It may look funny, but once you try it, you

realize how serious and demanding it really is,” said competitor Yasunori Miura, who trains several times a week on heavier chairs to build leg strength. Though whimsical on the surface, the sport offers something deeper: a break from routine and a shared sense of joy in a country known for long working hours. For organizers and participants alike, the race is less about silliness than about rediscovering play, competition, and connection beyond the office desk.



Photo: Mark Zuckerberg visits Capitol Hill but declines to answer questions on the social media trial.

Image Source: Getty Images/BBC

# Silicon Valley Faces Reckoning

## Meta and YouTube found liable in landmark addiction case

**Charles Lewis**

A Los Angeles jury has found Meta and YouTube liable for designing addictive platforms that harmed the mental health of a 20-year-old plaintiff known as Kaley, handing down a \$6 million award. After nine days of deliberation, jurors agreed with claims that the platforms worsened her struggles with body dysmorphia, depression,

and suicidal thoughts. The verdict included \$3 million in compensation and \$3 million in punitive damages. Both companies said they will appeal. Still, the ruling is being seen as a major moment for the tech industry, with more lawsuits expected over whether social media companies knowingly built products to maximize engagement at the expense of users’ well-being.